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SOURCE Chekiang Jih-pao.

CHEKIANG PROVINCE INSTITUTES NEW FORESTRY CONTROLS
 TO PREVENT VANDALISM AND IRRESPONSIBILITY

Neglect by local authorities, vandalism, and carelessness of the population have resulted in widespread destruction of timber. Fires and pilferage by landlords and others have occurred in numerous areas of Chekiang Province. As a result of uncontrolled cutting, private speculation, and competitive bidding by state trading organizations, there was serious confusion in the timber market. Education of the masses and tightening of controls are expected to rectify matters.

ESTABLISH SPECIAL COMMITTEES TO PROMOTE FOREST CONSERVATION -- Hangchow, Chekiang Jih-pao, 18 Sep 51

Forests in the vicinity of Sui-ch'ang, Kai-hua, and Ch'u Hsien in the Special Administrative District of Ch'u-chou, Chekiang, are being ruined because local authorities have neglected tree conservation and reforestation. Illegal landlords and special agents have burned hillsides and cut many trees. Speculating merchants have bought timber at high prices. The Special Administrative District Office is worried and is now trying to rectify the situation.

The seriousness of the 1951-1952 forestry problem can be seen from the following:

1. Timber Destruction by Illegal Landlords and Land Saboteurs

Over 10,000 trees were burned down at Sui-ch'ang after liberation. In Shih-wu T'ou (Shuang-ch'iao Hsiang of Tu-tse Ch'u, Ch'u Hsien), the illegal landlord, Juan Jung-huei, incited local peasants to cut down over 100,000 fir and bamboo trees during October 1949, over 3,000 trees in March 1950, and 5,000 trees in June 1950.

2. Confusion in Lumber Buying

Lumber merchants flocked to Sin-ch'ang and K'ai-hua, and raised lumber prices by competing with each other in buying. When the time for government lumber buying arrived, the main office of the Special Administrative District Cooperative, and the state-owned China Coal and Building Materials Company did not indiscriminate the peasants, but raised prices in competitive bidding.

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According to the report of the K'ai-hua forest investigation unit, Peasant Ho Fu-tai of Chung-ta-shan Ts'un (Hua-ch'iao Hsiang, Ts'un-t'ou Ch'u) said that when the men from the main office of the Special Administrative District Cooperative first came to purchase pine, 2 liang-ma ^{one} liang-ma equals approximately one cubic meter⁷ were selling for 240,000 yuan; on their next visit the price had risen to 270,000 yuan; when the state-owned China Coal and Building Materials Company representatives came to buy, the price had reached 300,000 yuan. Employees of the company told the people that since the price of lumber was now high and that of millet low, they should cut lumber and exchange it for millet. They said that since tree felling would not be permitted in the future they had better cut now.

3. Peasants Burn Trees While Firing Hill Grass

There have been many incidents of destruction similar to those at Sui-ch'ang and K'ai-hua. For example, a peasant of Ta-chih Ch'u in Sui-ch'ang Hsien burned over 10,000 trees. During the first half of 1951, over 10,000 trees were consumed in Huang-ku Hsiang in K'ai-hua Hsien. According to the report of the Forest Investigation Unit, as late as August this tree arson was being continued. For example, on the evening of 22 August 1951, in Lung-shan-ti Ts'un (in Hua-pu Ch'u, K'ai-hua Hsien) 6 or 7 mou of hill trees were destroyed by fire. On 23 August, at Erh-ts'un (in Chin Ts'un, Ch'ang-kuan Ch'u) 10,000 trees were consumed. There were similar incidents at Hung-ch'iao and Ta-pu ts'un.

According to the above incomplete statistics, there were a total of 62,300 trees destroyed by fire. Neither local party nor government leaders gave the situation serious thought. They even released peasants, who burned out 50 mou of trees, without reprimanding and correcting them.

Reconstruction experts of the Special Administrative District have embarked upon a program to protect existing trees, plant trees where there are none, mobilize the masses, and supervise tree felling. They decided to set up the following special activities organizations:

1. The special administrative district, the hsien, and the ch'u agricultural and forestry agencies are to appoint special persons to be responsible for reconstruction of the timber industry.
2. Leadership in the lumber industry organizations and lumber mills is to be strengthened and the records of (lumber) business management are to be examined more carefully.
3. Forest conservation committees are to be set up among the masses in ch'u, hsiang, and ts'un; and forestry supervision is to be strengthened.
4. The directives of the East China Military and Administrative Committee and of the provincial people's government to establish a timber-felling supervisory committee are to be followed.

PERMIT SYSTEM TO CONTROL TREE FELLING -- Hangchow, Chekiang Jih-pao, 18 Sep 51

Since the tree-felling control system was put into effect in Lin-an Hsien and the masses were activated, the wholesale felling of timber has been stopped. Since the liberation, illegal landlords and private merchants have been in collusion and, using their agricultural and forestry tax payments as well as their "poverty" as pretexts, they have cut down large numbers of trees. Landlord Chou

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Hsin-fu chopped down over 20,000 pines. Merchants seized the opportunity to buy large amounts of lumber. Forests throughout the hsien were being depleted. At the lumber markets the entire administrative mechanism was thrown into confusion. Also, some forests were completely denuded as a result of cadre neglect.

In July 1951, in an effort to stop this destruction, the East China Regional Government and the Chekiang People's Government set up a strict permit system, by which persons must receive official authorization before chopping down trees. All state and private buyers, prior to cutting timber, must first check with village peasant associations, village forest conservation committees, the village people's government, and the ch'u office; then, they must have the approval of the hsien people's government, which will issue a timber-cutting permit.

If, after the timber is cut, the purchaser wishes to ship it beyond hsien boundaries, he must apply for permission at the hsien people's government, Agricultural and Forestry Section, and, if his request is in order, he must finally procure a transport permit from the hsien Industry and Commerce Section. Authorizations for timber cutting and buying in such ch'u as Ch'ing-yun and Ting-tzu were not granted. Forest conservation committees have been set up in all hsien and ts'un, and local militia are charged with checking timber at its transport point-of-origin; all lumber found without a transport permit is held until such a permit is secured. After the strict control system was instituted, the serious problems resulting from indiscriminate tree cutting in Lin-an Hsien were resolved.

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